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SUBJECT **Tactical Deviations from the Strategy of the  
SED Inherent in the Prague Resolution**

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1. On 25 November 1950 Anton Ackermann, Secretary of State of the DDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after Celsner, the SED's most outstanding theoretician, lectured on "Strategy and Tactics" before the student body of the SED Karl Marx Academy in Klein-Machnow. In outlining the tenets of the Lenin-Stalinist theory of Strategy and Tactics in their practical bearing upon the relations between the DDR and the Federal Republic, Ackermann stated the following:

U.S. In its resolution of 8 June 1945, the KPD set itself the task of creating an anti-fascist democratic order. Since that time significant changes have taken place. The strategic goal of the current phase is the liberation of Western Germany from the foreign yoke, the creation of a unified, independent, democratic, peace-loving Germany. (1)

1. The general staff leading this fight is the Politburo of the SED while the directorate of the EPD is charged with the task of developing on its own initiative an independent role in the execution of this policy. The working class of Western Germany and of the DDR march toward the same goal from different starting points and along different directions.

c. Although the DDR represents the cornerstone of a unified Germany, our most important concern is Western Germany. The principal feature of the class struggle in the DDR is the waging of defensive action against sabotage and diversion. Western Germany, on the other hand, uses fighting methods identical with those employed by the KPD prior to 1933: Defense of the interests of the working population, incitement of strikes and mass strikes, winning over the masses to the common struggle against American imperialism. The vital element of the KPD is "Massenarbeit".

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## II. The Theory of the Main Effort (Hauptstoss) (2)

It is never appropriate to initiate an inner-party discussion concerning the "Hauptstoss". If in isolated instances such discussions spring up, then they must be quelled immediately. Under no circumstances should the "Hauptstoss" become the subject of mass agitation and propaganda. Let us beware of the theory of the "kleine Zörrgibel". (3) To direct the "Hauptstoss" against the SPD would be the worst expression of sectarianism. (4)

## III. The Peace Movement

Prior to the Stockholm Peace Congress, the peace organization in Germany was a mere appendix to the Kulturbund. (5) The peace movement in Western Germany is to be based on the following slogans: against re-militarization, against the North Atlantic Pact, for the prohibition of incitement to war among peoples, for an understanding with all peace loving peoples. It is not essential that friends of peace should from the start be friends of the USSR. This is a matter of educating them within the peace movement.

## IV. The National Front

It would be a mistake to raise the demand that all of Germany be patterned after the DDR model. The population of Western Germany must be won over with the following slogans:

For the formation of an all-Germany council.

For a rapid overcoming of the split.

For the conclusion of a democratic Peace Treaty.

Away with the High Commissioners.

Away with the Council of Europe.

It would be completely erroneous to put forward slogans demanding land reform and expropriation of monopolies. For that it would be too early. Under no circumstances should elements of the final struggle for socialism be injected in the current phase of the struggle for gaining leadership of the masses.

## V. United Action of the Working Class (Aktionseinheit der Arbeiterklasse) (6)

The platform of Aktionseinheit in Western Germany is as follows:

- a. The workers must join on the basis of the peace movement.
- b. The workers must join on the basis of the National Front.
- c. The workers must join in the common resistance against the increasing (economic) burden imposed upon them.
- d. The workers must join in raising concrete demands in favor of the unemployed.
- e. The workers must join in raising comprehensive democratic demands.

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- (1) Comment. This formulation has been borrowed from the telegram sent by Stalin to Grotewohl on the occasion of the founding of the DDR.

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- (2) Comment. In the various phases of the Communist struggle for power, the "Hauptstoss" always pursues as its objective the destruction of the principal opponent. However, the "Hauptstoss" is not directed against the principal opponent. It is directed against those forces which enable the principal opponent to influence and harness to his purposes the masses. Once the "Hauptstoss" has resulted in the destruction of those forces, when the principal opponent has been isolated from his mass basis and is bound to lose out in the ensuing struggle.

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- (3) Comment. This term associates the name of the energetic pre-1932 SPD chief of police of Berlin, a favorite butt of KPD attacks, with the theory that the rank and file of the SPD is composed of "kleine Zörrgibel".

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- (4) Comment.

- a. During the current phase the strategic goal of the SED is to re-unite Germany, an anti-fascist, democratic Germany. The principal opponent is U.S. imperialism. The "Hauptstoss" is directed against the helpers of U.S. imperialism who furnish it with a popular basis, i.e. the bourgeois parties of Western Germany and the Bonn Federal Government. Included among the "Hauptstoss" targets are the leadership of trade unions and SPD. Inasmuch, however, as the majority of the working population are organized within the trade unions and the SPD, one draws a distinction between leadership and membership and strives with all means to win over the organized workers.
- b. An essential facet of the "Hauptstoss" is the exploitation of differences within the enemy's camp. One is at all times prepared to form temporary alliances with personages who are irreconcilable foes of Communism (vide Gericke, Niemoeller) and to yield to compromise provided this augments disunity within the enemy's ranks.
- c. The resolutions passed at the Prague conference failed to denounce or condemn the Federal Government. The same omission was notable in Grotewohl's proclamations subsequent to the Prague conference. The Politburo was required to establish a direct connection with the Federal Government in order "to institute unity from above". Particularly the Forst Zinna conference, an unofficial gathering between East and West Zone representatives, had finally convinced the SED that "unity from below", i.e., through popular pressure exerted by the West Zone population was, for the time being at least, not realizable.
- d. The change in tactics entailed by Prague made it inadvisable to continue maintaining among functionary circles the prevailing view that the "Hauptstoss" is directed against Bonn. As a result Fred Oelssner in his lecture on the Prague conference, held before the same assemblage on 17 November 1950, designating U.S. imperialism as the main target of the "Hauptstoss" created considerable confusion among the students of the Karl Marx Academy (being completely at variance with the never challenged theory that the "Hauptstoss" is not directed against the principal enemy). They finally consoled themselves with the thought that this represented a tactical re-grouping to be judged in the light of the current political situation and of the unity proposals of the DDR. Ackermann's expose on the "Hauptstoss" merely served to compound confusion. His giving this question short shrift by stating that the "Hauptstoss" was no longer a matter for discussion, was an injunction that had to be observed in subsequent seminars. Based on Stalin's dictum that Marxism is no dogma but a guide toward practical action, the students considered it advisable to cease all discussions lest they expose themselves to the suspicion that they are unable to comprehend the creative application of Marxism.

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- (5) ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. In this connection it should be mentioned that the Kulturbund is definitely on its way out.

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- (6) ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ Comment. Aktionseinheit should not be confused with Einheit der Arbeiterklasse. It merely denotes joint action during a specific period directed against a common enemy, not organizational fusion on the basis of the fight for socialism.

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